

**Minutes, Meeting of the Metuchen Environmental Commission  
July 20, 2016**

2016	JAN 20	FEB 17	MAR 16	APR 20	MAY 18	JUN 15	JUL 20	SEP 21	OCT 19	NOV 16
M. Herzberg, Chair	A	P	P	P	P	P	P			
D. Rasmussen, Liaison	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
A. Dohl	M	A	P	P	P	P	P			
J. Schaffer	A	M	M	P	A	A	P			
B. Weeks	A	P	P	M	M	P	P			
Lynn Nowak, Planning Bd. Liaison	-	-	-	-	A	A	P			
A. Dutemple	P	P	P	P	M	P	A		M	M
J. Kelly	A	P	P	P	A	P	M	M		

Key: P=Present, A=Absent, R=Resigned; M=Minutes Assigned/Taken.

Mark called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Visitors**

Nirmal Prakesh, a boy scout in Troop 74, returned to the Commission to discuss the logistics of his Eagle Scout project, which is a raised bed community garden in Kentnor Park. The most appropriate type of fencing was discussed. The Commission recommended wood fencing due to ease of installation, but height of fence should be considered with regard to potential shading of the garden. Prakesh's plan called for raised beds, but the Commission suggested that raised beds may not be needed, due to cost and amount of work required for installation. It was suggested that Prakesh speak to the Borough Administrator for more suggestions and advice, as well as the Northeast Organic Farming Association at Duke Farms.

**Minutes of June 2016 meeting**

Approved.

**Correspondence**

A proposal regarding solar applications on municipal buildings (discussed later in the meeting under New Business).

There were 2 additions of the DEP bulletin. The July 6<sup>th</sup> bulletin mentions the DJH property at 215 Liberty St. with regard to transition area averaging for wetlands as they

expanded their footprint. The June 15<sup>th</sup> bulletin references wetland determinations regarding the District at Metuchen project.

### **Grant Update**

No updates.

### **Dismal Swamp**

The Dismal Swamp Commission met recently and will ask for \$95,000 from the state legislature, which was the amount of funding that they were supposed to get in 2009 upon formation.

### **Community Outreach**

The June 25<sup>th</sup> Farmers Market composter table was a success with 30 more residents signed up to receive a composter. A master gardener and Pesticide Free Metuchen also participated at the table.

### **Sustainable Jersey**

The Sustainable Jersey website is now unlocked, and actions to be counted for certification can be entered. September 8<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for submissions to be counted for this year's awards.

### **Planning Board**

Lynn Nowak, Planning Board member, was present at her first Environmental Commission meeting, after recently being appointed Liaison.

A public meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for July 21<sup>st</sup> with regard to the Master Plan Re-Examination Report and open space recommendations. It was suggested that management of invasive species be given consideration when the Planning Board is managing open spaces.

### **New business**

Correspondence was sent to the Commission with regard to a grant opportunity if a certain number of residents convert to solar power. Joe Schaffer will look into bringing a solar expert to a Commission meeting who can provide an overview of solar power

issues. It was noted that there are potential liabilities and issues that need to be explored before encouraging residents to install solar panels. It was also discussed that the Borough should first consider installing solar panels on Borough buildings to set an example for residents and businesses.

### **Greenway Update**

The Greenway Coalition will have an informational table at the Farmer's market on July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Public Comment**

A member of the public was present and noted that recycling bins in the downtown area should be more prominently labeled so they are not used for trash. Councilwoman Rasmussen stated that the downtown area will be getting new recycle bins. It was also mentioned that there is no trash bin at the Farmers Market. This will be investigated. The resident also requested that the Borough start a rag recycling program, and the Green Drop location in town was suggested as an alternative. Lastly, the resident asked if the Borough was researching other recyclers to avoid dumping fees. The Borough will look into this issue.

### **Next meeting**

Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Kelly